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lantic cable had lost everything, and he repeated that he hoped they would never hear anything more about those distant oceanic cables. He was very much obliged to Sir Henry Rawlinson for his paper, for it dealt practically with a most important subject.

SIR RODERICK MURCHISON said that before Mr. Markham read his paper he had to apologise to the Meeting for the unavoidable absence of their President, Lord Ashburton. The President's next soirée was fixed for Wednesday the 19th inst., when his Lordship would be glad to see them all at Bath House. He also wished to state that they had a recent communication from Dr. Livingstone, which showed that he had made an attempt with the *Pioneer* to ascend the river Rufuma; and, after grounding several times, he had been obliged to desist, returning to the mouth of the river, and finding his way back to the Zambesi, with the intention of going to his old country watered by the Shire.

The Second Paper read was—

2. *Sources of the River Purus, in South America.* By C. R. MARKHAM, Esq., F.R.G.S.

MR. MARKHAM had been employed on a special service by H. M.'s Government in the early part of this year, to collect cinchona plants in South America—a duty which led him to explore the country immediately to the n. and n.w. of Lake Titicaca. There arise the rivers Madre de Dios and Ynambari, which are the chief headwaters of the still unexplored Purus. The Purus is the only great southern affluent of the Amazon which is entirely unknown to geographers, although, from its position and body of water, it seems destined to become the most important of them all. Without Mr. Markham's sketch-map it is difficult to explain the results of his explorations. They were chiefly in the province of Caravaya, which lies at the foot of the Eastern Andes, extending from Marcapata to the frontier of Bolivia. The history of this province dates from Inca historians, by whom we hear of it yielding great quantities of gold, and is continued in Charles V.'s time, when a party of runaway gold-digging mulattoes settled in it. Ultimately the Spaniards took possession. About seven years ago it attracted attention anew, and became a sort of California to South America, but success in gold-digging was found uncertain, and the excitement died away. Crucero, so called from the number of roads that cross in the place, is the mud-hut capital of the province, planted on a bleak table-land, 13,000 feet above the sea. On the west snow-mountains rise high above the town, but eastward the descent is rapid into the forest-covered plains of South America. In these warm slopes lie all the wealth and population of Caravaya. Its population is about 22,000, and they export cocoa, coffee, chili pepper, and gold. The valleys between the consecutive spurs of the Andes are described in order by Mr. Markham; the direct roads

from one to the other are so difficult, that it is often more troublesome to cross the intervening ridges than to travel up to Crucero and thence down the valley aimed for. To these geographical features is due the importance of the seat of the capital. Sandia is the most important of the valleys, and is the one where Mr. Markham stayed the longest. Its sides are terraced with the now abandoned gardens of the Incas, and the scenery—a mixture of tropical vegetation with crags and snowy mountains and silver torrents—is described as of superb beauty. Abundant cinchona-trees are found there.

SIR RODERICK MURCHISON thought they were very much indebted to Mr. Markham for the services he had rendered. He was one of the few travellers who had examined both sides of the Andes. Mr. Markham had recently been actively engaged in transporting the cinchona or bark-plant to India, to establish plantations of it in a country where vast sums are expended in the purchase of quinine to keep in health our troops and the natives employed by us. He (Sir Roderick) could not adjourn the Meeting without warmly congratulating them on the success of the Session just ended.

The proceedings then terminated, and the Meeting was adjourned to the next Session.

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## ADDITIONAL NOTICES.

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1. *Currents and Ic drifts on the Coasts of Iceland.* By Capt. C. IRMINGER, of the Danish Navy, Corresponding Member R.G.S.

IN the northern part of the Atlantic Ocean the surface-water sets steadily with a gentle flow towards the north. Coming, as it does, from more heated regions, and being constantly provided by fresh supplies of heated water, it maintains, as is well known, a moderating influence on the climate of the coasts which are washed by it.

Between Iceland and Norway this current takes a north-easterly direction to the Icy Sea, but without touching the extreme eastern coast of Iceland. It tempers the climate of the Faroe Islands, Shetland, &c.; and its influence is so considerable on the coasts of Norway, that harbours, even up to the North Cape (which is in about  $71^{\circ}$  lat. N.), admit shipping the whole year round, while in the coldest time of winter it is only the innermost of the smaller bays in the fiords that are covered with ice.

To the westward of the meridian that halves Iceland, the current from the south runs in a north-westerly, or even more northerly direction, until it is stopped by the current from the sea around Spitzbergen. This "Arctic current" runs south-west; it passes the north-west coast of Iceland on its way to Greenland, along whose coast it makes its way and rounds Cape Farewell. The first-mentioned current from the Atlantic Ocean washes the south-west and west coasts of Iceland, and is found to run true N.  $33^{\circ}$  W. at the rate of 1·19 nautical mile in 24 hours, throughout an area extending between w. long.  $18^{\circ}$ , N. lat.  $62^{\circ}$ , and the south coast of Iceland towards Cape Reikianæs; but, west of